The Influence of Cultural Atmosphere on Undergraduate English Teaching—Based on the Perspective of Practical Personnel Cultivation

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Abstract. Language education is closely related to the language environment. As one of the most widely used languages in the world, English teaching should pay more attention to creating a language atmosphere. Though College English courses are widely offered in Chinese universities, students have a negative perception on the current English learning situation. From the generation of language habits and the process of inheritance, the cultural atmosphere has a profound influence on language learning. The goal of the English literacy improvement of practical personnel in colleges and universities is to explore a more reasonable and efficient teaching paradigm by studying the influence of cultural atmosphere on undergraduate English teaching.

Introduction
The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China reported that culture is the soul of an ethnic and a state. Culture can rejuvenate the state and the ethnic. Without a high degree of cultural self-confidence and cultural prosperity, there would be no great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. President Xi (2017) pointed out that in a country or nation, the overall cultural atmosphere is tied with its national language, and Chinese as the national language is as profound as Chinese culture [1]. The difficulty of learning English for Chinese people is not only the difference between the two language systems but also the difference in the cultural atmosphere. English belongs to the West Germanic branch of the Indo-European Germanic language family. It evolved from the language spoken by the Germans of the Anglo, Saxon, and Judt tribes who emigrated from the European continent to the British Isles and spread through British colonial activities out to all parts of the world [2]. In-depth study of Chinese from the aspects of language coding, transmission and decoding reveal that ancient Chinese is closer to the initial state of human language, so it can more clearly reflect the commonalities of the human language that have not been obscured by complex morphological systems [3].

Chinese characters belong to hieroglyphics, while English belongs to alphabetic script. Compared with other language users whose native language belongs to alphabetic script, Chinese people have more difficulties in learning English. For the locale, the cultural environment is the key link. While maintaining, inheriting and promoting local culture, it is difficult to create a cultural atmosphere for foreign language teaching and learning in China. College English teaching has undergone many changes since the Republic of China. No matter what the political situation, the diplomatic situation, or the social culture or social thoughts, these changes are closely related to the changes in the local language environment at that time. It can be said that the language environment of English learning is an objective promotion and an important influencing factor for the innovation of the English teaching curriculum.

Comparative Analysis of the Native Language Environment of English and Chinese
From the perspective of the history of world civilization, looking back to the living environment of the first English users, we understand that English is first evolved from the early Germanic language. The migration of the Germanic people occurred around 449 AD, and the formal formation of English was even later. From early human activities to the invasion of the Roman legions, the
migration of the Germans, the famous “seven countries”, the early eighteenth and eleventh century
Danish invasion, and then the French invasion of 1066, from William I, Charlie The Second, to the
Tudor dynasty, and after the British-French Hundred Years’ War, until the 1536 enclosure
movement, the British population gradually stabilized. Adaptable species, that is, the most efficient
species in the natural environment, always dominate nature and continue to expand their range of
activities [4]. The millennial aggression, anti-aggression, occupation, and occupational change in
British land have stabilized the population after repeated integration. The original language has also
undergone development repeatedly, and it was not until the aggression of the “Imperial Empire” in
the 19th century that modern English was stabilized. In other words, the development of English is
formed by the constant integration of multiple cultures in the collision of civilizations. The
inheritance and the fragmentation are intertwined, and the combination of absorption and
abandonment eventually forms the English we are speaking today.

Compared with the cycle of the English Language’s fracture and fusion, the development and
evolution of Chinese are more inherited and continuous. China has an ancient history that can be
tested starting from Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors [5]. The earliest Chinese text is 8000
years ago, that is, the Yin Shang era in the sixth century BC since the Three Sovereigns and Five
Emperors [5]. The Chinese language environment has not suffered much in the past 10,000 years,
and there has never been a cultural break. Although in the long history, the Chinese nation has
experienced many influxes of foreign or non-Chinese nationalities, the overall language
environment has never had a major impact. Historically, the most famous foreign rule was the
Mongolian Yuan Dynasty and the Manchus Qing Dynasty. But the ones that were affected and
generalized were the Mongolians and Manchus who ruled the Central Plains. Chinese has strong
compatibility, and the continuity of its inheritance proves this. Even in the period when the
Mongolians and Manchus were highly likely to change the language environment, the inheritance of
Chinese has not been severely altered or changed.

The Impact of Chinese and Foreign Cultural Atmosphere on the Language Environment

In English-speaking countries, the recognition of English as the official language is the result of
British colonial activities. Under the violent impact and long-term influence of the colonial
activities, the integration of ontology culture and British culture became closer, and the influence of
British culture became deeper and deeper. Therefore, this mixed cultural atmosphere is more
influential to the development of English. Under the pressure of the colonists, British culture is
more aggressive. After generations’ development, the cultural atmosphere has undergone dramatic
changes, and the application of English has become more extensive, gradually laying the foundation
for the language environment in a larger and broader scope.

In China, traditional culture has always been strongly developed, passed down, and evolved in its
own way. Although the globalization is become the dominant trend throughout the world and
Chinese people need a certain level of English proficiency to take the lead in the globalization, the
guarantee of national cultural security is equally important. In China, English has been introduced
in a relatively peaceful way, and has been widely accepted as a foreign language tool. From
Self-Strengthening Movement’s “beat someone by playing his games only better” to the end of
“avoid having contacts with other countries”, people of insight gradually begin to contact foreign
languages and explore advanced Western technologies. After the founding of the People’s Republic
of China, English has gradually become a compulsory in the educational curriculum. Especially
after the reform and opening, China’s national strength has gradually become stronger. Many fields
have even gone beyond Asia and entered the world. English has become an important
communication tool. Although the current cultural environment has not changed, the gradually open
social mentality and inclusive cultural attitude have greatly improved the English learning
environment.
Exploring the Influence of Cultural Atmosphere in Undergraduate English Teaching

In the process of college English teaching at the undergraduate level, the influence of cultural atmosphere is very important. In the early days of reform and opening, English was not popular in China. At that time, students had a certain sense of freshness and superiority in learning English. Moreover, a certain number of students at that time had a need for English for employment reasons. Therefore, they were active in learning English. However, due to the limited comprehensive language ability of English teachers at the time, the English level of students did not improve much. Although with the deepening of reform and opening, foreign cultures have entered China, the requirements for foreign language proficiency in students’ academic and employment have also become more differentiated. Therefore, the overall quality of English teaching has declined to some extent.

Although the English learning atmosphere is developing in a positive direction, there are still some obstacles to overcome regarding students’ motivation and the impact of the cultural environment in the college English teaching. Some language education experts are trying to find a way to engage students. They hope to motivate students’ English learning by flipping classrooms and teaching English in a communicating way, but there is still the “habitual memory weakening” need to be resolved. The culture and atmosphere of English learning cannot meet the needs of students in learning.

Experiential Teaching Model in College English Teaching: Culture-Oriented Teaching

At present, the college English teaching should focus on the cultural atmosphere building, not only on limited English corners, English festivals but also should pay great attention to the comparative way of teaching English. With the help of new techniques and the administrative support, this teaching model will construct a rigid cultural environment and strengthen students’ sense of language experience and practicality. Specifically, this “Cultural Platform” experiential teaching model aims to build a comprehensive English curriculum that integrates learning, self-paced study, regular daily English application check, English practice activities, distant learning training to facilitate the language learning process.

Establishment of Self-study Room with English Cultural Features

Establish the self-study space with English culture will stipulates the students’ self-study. The English language learning environment is designed through the cultural characteristics of English-speaking countries such as classroom arrangement and work and rest arrangement. A time should be set for self-study in English to ensure that students feel the most and understand English cultural background in school. The teacher is on duty to supervise the students and answer questions for them to ensure English learning time and quality.

Construction of the Assessment System Framework for Applied English

At the specified time and place, students are required to communicate only in English. They will have to apply English to their daily lives and feel the difference between Chinese and English. Regular inspections and assessments are organized to improve the frequency of students’ contact, application and experience of English. Moreover, the performance of this activity is included in the final assessment.

Distant Learning

By arranging video assignments, online assessments, etc., students are encouraged to continue their English studies during the holidays, and to develop cultural edification and training outside of class time to maintain language proficiency.
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